

Minutes of the East Greenwich School Committee

Tuesday, May 15, 2012

Archie Cole Middle School Library

100 Cedar Avenue

East Greenwich, RI 02818

7:00p.m. Regular Meeting

Those in attendance were Dr. Deidre Gifford, Chair; Mr. Robert Durant, Vice-Chair, Mr. David Green; Mrs. Mary Ellen Winters; Mrs. Susan Records, Mr. Paul Martin, and Mr. Jack Sommer (arrived at 7:12p.m.). Also present were Dr. Victor Mercurio, Superintendent; Mrs. Paula Dillon, Assistant Superintendent; Mrs. Maryanne Crawford, Director of Administration, and Mr. Carlos Zambrano, Director of Technology/Systems Analyst.

7:08p.m. Regular Meeting

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Deidre Gifford, Chair.

I. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

The meeting commenced with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

II. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

III. Approval of Minutes

a.Regular for 4/24/12 and Regular and executive for 5/1/12

On a motion by Mr. Durant, which was seconded by Mr. Martin, the Committee voted 7-0 to approve the minutes for 4/24/12 and 5/1/12.

IV. Recognitions

The following recognitions were made:

a. Maryanne Crawford, 2012 Rhode Island Business Official of the Year

b. Stephen Jarrell, EGHS Wrestling State Champion All-State

c. Ebed Jarrell, EGHS Wrestling State Champion All-State

On behalf of the School Committee, Dr. Gifford thanked Mrs. Crawford and commended her for her responsiveness to School Committee requests.

V. Superintendent's Report

The first round of interviews for the Meadowbrook principal was held last week. The second round will take place next week. The final candidate will be interviewed by the School Committee on June 5, 2012. East Greenwich High School was ranked #1 for the third year in a row by GoLocalProv. Dr. Mercurio congratulated EGHS students, staff, and administrators for their efforts. Dr. Mercurio was selected by RIDE to serve on a multi-state school superintendent panel to review the content of the Praxis exam which certifies central office administrators. Dr. Gifford congratulated and thanked the entire EGHS student body, faculty, and administrators for their hard work. A formal thank-you will be presented to faculty and administrators.

IV. School Committee Concerns

Mr. Martin's concerns included adding 2-3 more education days to the school year and the Cole baseball field drainage issue. Dr. Mercurio explained that Barrington is graduating after East Greenwich because of their professional development days and they

started the school year after East Greenwich. The Cole drainage issues are being addressed with SBS and Gilbane. Corrective action was taken at the end of last year and will be taken again this spring/summer. The field will be fully functional for the upcoming school year. Mr. Sommer discussed the issue of pets on the EGHS turf field. Signs need to be posted at the three entrances to the turf field that state pets are not allowed. Mr. Sommer noted there is a problem with trash on the fields. The parks and recreation department is responsible for trash, but are not present on the weekends for games. School custodians are not responsible for trash, but were gracious to empty trash cans and pick up trash on the field. Dr. Mercurio said the rental groups could be responsible for tying up the bags. Dr. Gifford noted this item could be added to the MOU or rental agreement. Mr. Sommer would also like signage that notes where students can cross the field when wearing spikes. Mr. Martin asked if there is a policy about pets on school property. There is not a district policy.

VII. Action Items

a. Sabbatical request for 2012-2013-Christina O'Day

Dr. Gifford read a letter from Ms. O'Day withdrawing her request as she did not receive grant funding from EGEF.

b. Resignation – Daniel Seger, Cole, Mock Trial Co-Coach

On a motion by Mrs. Winters, which was seconded by Mr. Durant, the Committee voted 7-0 to accept the resignation.

c. Appointment –Jody Mangiaratti, Cole, Mock Trial Coach

On a motion by Mrs. Winters, which was seconded by Mr. Durant, the

Committee voted 7-0 to approve the appointment.

VIII. 1:1 Technology Presentation

Dr. Mercurio and Mrs. Dillon gave a presentation on 1:1 I-pad technology in the classroom discussing the benefits of digital learning. School Committee members were provided with I-pads for the presentation. Mr. Rath was also present and discussed the possibility of a 1:1 science grant which may provide technology money for the classroom. Four secondary teachers are interested and will receive training in July and August. This grant will supplement Gems-Net. Mr. Rath is using forty-five I-pads in his classroom instead of textbooks. Other areas using I-pads include the Cole library and special education. Mrs. Dillon explained how I-pads can eliminate consumables, various textbooks, and paper. The Committee would like a cost analysis of moving to I-pads including professional development and training. Some districts charge \$37.00 per student, per year for I-pad insurance. Dr. Gifford will have the policy committee draft policy that addresses technology rollout. She asked that no additional I-Pad purchases be made until there is a policy in place.

IX. Discussion Items

a. Budget FY2013

The original proposed budget was \$34,292,050. The budget was further reduced by priority one reductions which totaled \$288,064. On May 7, 2012, additional reductions were presented in the amount of \$66,000. These reductions were from transportation and additional retirees. The district anticipates an additional \$10,000 related to

average daily membership. Total proposed state aid is projected at \$1,801,453. On May 14th, The Town Council voted to increase the proposed school budget by \$175,000 instead of the requested \$254,000. Mrs. Crawford has an additional list of cuts that total \$79,331. The adjusted proposed budget for 2013 has been revised to \$33,611,573. Dr. Mercurio discussed Gems Net and their proposal for a three-year contract. The district will maintain the kits or use East Bay Collaborative which will save money. Mr. Zambrano discussed the technology cuts including network switches and the server in the central office. He anticipates funding from RIDE and other areas that can pay for the network switches. The server in the central office will need to be replaced and can be done using other funds. Dr. Gifford would like Mr. Zambrano to defer taking any action until the district gets the final number on state aid which may give the district some flexibility. Since the financial town meeting is scheduled for June 12th, there may be a need to have a School Committee meeting on June 11, 2012. There is a possibility the June 5th meeting will be moved to June 11th if necessary. Dr. Gifford expressed gratitude to the Town Council for their time and effort in reviewing and approving the School Committee's budget.

b. Building Committee

Dr. Gifford announced that Mr. Green will take over as chair of the Building Committee since Mr. Gowell stepped down. The district list serv was used last week to solicit a new member(s) (from the Meadowbrook community) for the Building Committee. The deadline to apply is May 18th. Mr. Green would like to revisit the facility

inventory and reprioritize the list. The Building Committee will reconvene in June.

c. Institute of Medicine-new recommendations

Dr. Gifford discussed the recent report from the Institute of Medicine regarding obesity. Goal 5 relates to “Making schools a national focal point for obesity prevention.” Dr. Gifford would like a summary of where the district stands in regards to minutes of exercise per week in school, recess, and EG after-school sports. Dr. Mercurio will compile this information over the summer and share the recommendations of the Institute of Medicine report with RIDE. The summary of findings will be discussed with the School Committee and then forwarded to the Health/Wellness Committee if necessary.

d. Substance Abuse

Dr. Gifford would like a small sub-committee to explore the substance abuse issues in the district to find out if there are issues that need to be addressed by the Committee. She would like to know the trends as there is quite a bit of discussion in the community. Mrs. Dillon and Mrs. Records will work on this task. Mrs. Dillon can provide a report of issues without listing student names.

e. Grade Configuration

Mrs. Dillon provided a detailed explanation regarding the need for additional staff if grade three is reconfigured. Dr. Mercurio explained it makes sense to wait until the following year especially due to the budget and the early childhood initiatives that are being developed at RIDE. State funding, rather than local funding, may be available for these initiatives. Holding off another year may provide opportunities

for full-day kindergarten. Mr. Martin made an initial motion to hold off on reconfiguration for at least a year. Dr. Mercurio asked for a stronger motion. Mr. Martin restated his motion recommending the district implement the reconfiguration for the 2013-2014 school year. Mr. Durant seconded the motion noting it is not fiscally possible this year. Mr. Green noted his concern about funding and wants to ensure that reconfiguration is included in the budgeting process for 2013-14. The Committee voted 7-0.

f. Jobs Bill Funding

Mrs. Crawford discussed the teaching position that was supposed to be funded through Jobs Bill last year, but was not funded. The funding of \$60,142 was restored. When approving positions, the Committee would like to know if the position is funded through the budget, grant-funded, or temporarily grant-funded. Mrs. Dillon noted the School Committee “new” agenda sheets specify the funding source (i.e., grant or budget).

g. Excellence in Education Forum

The next forum for “Excellence in Education” will take place on Monday, May 21, 2012 at 7:00p.m. in the Cole chorus room. Topics include longer school day, increased number of school days per year, scheduling strategies, R.I. Board of Regents requirements, and alternative classroom time including nights and weekends.

h. Electronic Board Meetings

Dr. Gifford discussed the RIASC meeting she attended which included a presentation on software developed for School Committee meetings. A sub-committee made up of Mr. Zambrano, Mrs. Dillon,

Mr. Durant, and Mrs. Records will examine options and report back in September.

X. Adjournment

On a motion by Mr. Martin, which was seconded by Mr. Durant, the Committee voted 7-0 to adjourn at 9:55p.m.

CHRISTINE DIMEGLIO

SECRETARY